

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: The Anchorage Urban League****Federal Tax ID: 31-1544196****Project Title:****Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition**

Anchorage Urban League - Alaska Seeds of Change Transitional Youth Program

State Funding Requested: \$1,000,000
One-Time Need

House District: Anchorage Areawide (17-32)**Brief Project Description:**

The Seed for Change project assists at-risk youth with transitional education completion, employment and affordable housing.

Funding Plan:**Total Cost of Project: \$6,972,538**

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>
State Funds					\$1,400,000	10
Denali Commission			\$1,400,000	10		
Rasmuson Foundation			\$1,500,000	10		
Local Funds	\$50,000		\$823,284	10		
Other Funds			\$1,000,000	10		
Total	\$50,000		\$4,723,284		\$1,400,000	

*Explanation of Other Funds:**Federal (811) Housing Grant for Housing/Building Renovation Private Investor/AKMHTA-2010**AHFC Mortgage for Greenhouse and Land.***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Please see attached description.

Project Timeline:

Land and Planning 4/09-12/09

Construction 5/2010-4/2011

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Anchorage Urban League and program participants

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name:	Eleanor Andrews
Address:	2627 C Street, Ste 100 Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone Number:	(907)276-0390
Email:	eleanor@nul-anchorage.org

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☐ Yes ☒ No



Alaska Seeds of Change
Growing Hope in Our Youth...
A program of Anchorage Urban League

Alaska Seeds of Change Transitional-Age Youth Program

Overview: A collaborative project led by Anchorage Urban League and supported by The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, *Alaska Seeds of Change (ASC)* will provide **employment and transitional housing** to a culturally diverse group of 20-24 at-risk youth between the ages of 17-22. Youth leaving foster care or institutional care will be targeted.

Youth will acquire the **employment, educational/vocational, and independent living skills** needed to become successful young adults. Program participants will have access to affordable transitional housing.

ASC will run a **sustainable urban agriculture business**. Operational costs will be met through the sale of high-quality produce to local restaurants, retailers, institutions, and at farmers' markets.

ASC will achieve market competitiveness by incorporating **innovative greenhouse and hydroponic growing technologies**. These will allow for significant extension of the growing season. Further operating efficiencies will be achieved through the use of waste heat from the Sullivan Electrical Generation Plant.

Program Highlights:

- ASC will provide youth with **comprehensive, individualized transitional services** that are coordinated with other community programs.
- ASC youth will participate in all major aspects of running an urban agriculture business, with increasing **responsibilities** and leadership opportunities.
- ASC will **collaborate with other youth-serving national organizations** (e.g., The Transition to Independence Process Model at the University of South Florida (<http://tip.fimhi.usf.edu>); The Food Project of Boston (**Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**); Austin LifeWorks (www.lifeworksweb.org).
- ASC will provide **practicum and service-learning experiences** for students from the University of Alaska Anchorage in applied fields of study. ASC will help promote **workforce development**.
- ASC will carry out comprehensive **process and outcome measurement** to ensure continuous improvement, and the communication of results allowing for program replication.

Program Specifics: ASC will be located in Anchorage and operate a 20,000 ft² greenhouse facility. Semi-congregate transitional housing for approximately 20-24 youth is another program component.

Program Outcomes:

1. Higher rates of permanent employment and increased job retention.
2. Completed educational and/or vocational training.
3. Safe and stable housing arrangements.
4. Less reliance upon public support, including fewer emergency room visits, reduced involvement with the legal system.
5. Creation of jobs that provide meaningful job skills and business experience.
6. Less disruption in daily functioning due to mental health and substance abuse problems in young adulthood.
7. Less victimization of transitional age youth.
8. Improved local environments and greater sense of civic pride due to neighborhood participation in community garden efforts.

For Further Information: Contact Anchorage Urban League at 279-0390 or www.nul-anchorage.org

Submitted by: ASSEMBLY MEMBERS COFFEY,
SELKREGG, GRAY-JACKSON, DRUMMOND, BIRCH,
CLAMAN, FLYNN, GUTIERREZ, JOHNSTON,
OSSIANDER, STARR

Prepared by: Assembly Counsel

For reading: August 25, 2009

CLERK'S OFFICE

APPROVED

Date:

8-25-09

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

AR NO. 2009-190

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL PLAN TO MAKE
AVAILABLE BY WRITTEN AGREEMENT OR LEASE MUNICIPAL PROPERTY AT
MUNICIPAL LIGHT & POWER PLANT 2 (GLENN HIGHWAY) AT MINIMAL COST
FOR ALASKA SEEDS OF CHANGE LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.**

WHEREAS, currently there are very few services available to assist young people transitioning out of the foster care system; when young people leave foster care they often end up jobless, homeless, or entering the correctional system; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Urban League is a not-for-profit corporation organized under 26 USC §501.C.3, and is the local affiliate of the National Urban League; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Urban League is the sponsor of Alaska Seeds of Change, a program to be offered in community partnership with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, NeighborWorks, Denali Family Services, local businesses and municipal and state social services organizations; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Seeds of Change targets high risk youth aged 17-22, referred from state and community programs and agencies, and utilizes University of Alaska student practicum placements to assist with case management; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of Alaska Seeds of Change is to offer a job-training and life skills development program for young people aging out of the foster care system, in the context of a greenhouse business to grow and sell vegetables to local markets; and

WHEREAS, training in financial literacy, job skills, continuing education, and high school completion are included, along with vocational training in greenhouse operation, business enterprise, facilities maintenance, conflict resolution and leadership – offering a basic skill set designed to promote successful youth transition to independent adulthood; and

WHEREAS, young people will enter the program after a screening and interview process that shows they are interested in gaining business and life skills and moving into satisfying employment and permanent housing. Approximately 20 youth will be served at a time with an average stay of for 6-18 months; and

WHEREAS, participants will work in the greenhouse for at least 10 hours per week, spending the remainder of their time completing education and engaging in training. Participants will be housed in a nearby housing complex with an on-site residential manager; and

1 WHEREAS, the Alaska Seeds of Change training program will include
2 greenhouse facilities on ½ acre for an 8-bay greenhouse of approximately 22,000
3 square feet, and an auxiliary building for classroom, meeting, office, produce storage
4 and preparation (refrigeration) and computer lab space; and
5

6 WHEREAS, location of Seeds of Change training on municipal grounds at
7 Municipal Light & Power Plant 2 on the Glenn Highway is critical for donation of
8 available waste heat from power generation; and
9

10 WHEREAS, the program is designed to provide critical social services at no out-
11 of-pocket cost to the Municipality; and
12

13 WHEREAS, for Seeds of Change to move forward under the Denali
14 Commission's business plan and funding process, the concept must have the support of
15 the local governing body; and
16

17 WHEREAS, if this preliminary conceptual plan is approved, the Anchorage Urban
18 League will move forward in the funding process through the Denali Commission, and
19 the Municipality of Anchorage will move forward to negotiate the terms and conditions
20 necessary for a written agreement or lease pursuant to Anchorage Municipal Code
21 section 25.30.040B., and bring those terms forward to the Assembly for approval by
22 ordinance for One Dollar per year for a term not to exceed the term limit provided under
23 25.30.050B; now therefore
24

25 THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:
26

27 **Section 1.** Subject to submission and approval of an ordinance, and as a preliminary
28 step in support of the Seeds of Change program sponsored by the Anchorage Urban
29 League, the conceptual plan to co-locate by lease or other written agreement the Seeds
30 of Change greenhouse and life skills training program on the Municipal Light & Power
31 Plant 2 site, with utilization of waste heat from power generation, is approved.
32

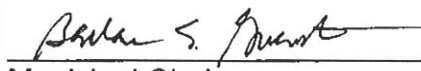
33 **Section 2.** Development and construction of the Seeds of Change greenhouse and
34 program buildings are subject to all applicable building code regulations.
35

36 **Section 3.** The Anchorage Assembly retains the authority to approve the terms and
37 conditions of any lease or other municipal agreement for the Alaska Seeds of Change
38 program.
39

40 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 25th day of
41 August, 2009.
42

43 
44 _____
45 Chair
46

47 ATTEST:
48

49 
Municipal Clerk



Anchorage
Urban League

Empowering Communities
Changing Lives

(907) 276-0309

Target Population: Alaska Seeds of Change targets youth ages 17-22 who are transitioning out of the children's behavioral health, foster and juvenile justice systems. These groups have compelling statistics that accompany them, especially with regard to unemployment, incarceration or re-incarceration, lack of educational access and homelessness. Each year over 20,000 youth nationwide "age out" of foster care services simply because they reach their 18th birthday and more than 100,000 youth and young adults leave federal or state correctional institutions, including juvenile detention facilities. While becoming an adult in today's world is an exciting time for many, it can also be a difficult road in today's changing labor market and shifting social and cultural landscape. Sometimes even the well-equipped young adults struggle. Add a criminal past and the struggles only multiply. Given the significant barriers to institutions that define adulthood—higher education, employment, and parenthood, it is perhaps not surprising that recidivism rates are as high as they are.

To help overcome the various barriers that transitioning youth face, Alaska Seeds of Change has created working relationships and/or partnerships with the following departments and organizations:

- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Anchorage School District,
- NeighborWorks
- University of Alaska, Anchorage
- The Foraker Group
- Denali Family Services
- Agnew-Beck
- State of Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice, Office of Children's Services, and Division of Behavioral Health.
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Casey Family Foundation
- Facing Foster Care in Alaska

Coordination and collaboration with these and other programs and institutions will be instrumental in making Alaska Seeds of Change an accessible and successful project.

The Anchorage Urban League is a non-profit (501c3) organization. To make a tax deductible contribution, or to get more information about the program, please contact us at:

Anchorage Urban League
Re: Alaska Seeds of Change
2627 C. Street
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 276-0390



Alaska Seeds of Change



**Providing Transitional
Services for Our Youth**

ALASKA SEEDS OF CHANGE

Alaska Seeds of Change (SOC) is a community-based transition program designed to help at-risk youth become productive adults by offering employment, housing, education, training and life-skills development. As a collaborative effort lead by the Anchorage Urban League and supported by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, SOC is a social enterprise in the form of a sustainable urban agriculture business, including a 22,000sf hydroponic greenhouse and a retail component. Successfully addressing the extraordinary barriers that at-risk youth face during their transition into adulthood requires a multi-level approach. The most vulnerable of this population are youth coming out of foster care, the juvenile and criminal justice system and the mental health system. During adolescence government programs have been a major part of their lives, yet eligibility for most programs typically ends between the ages of 18 and 21. There are unfortunate repercussions that follow this termination of support and an innovative strategy is required in order to improve these young peoples' chances of success in life.

Key Project Components:

Employment:

Through the creation and management of our commercial size hydroponics greenhouse and retail business, the Alaska Seeds of Change program will be able to employ at-risk youth and provide career development experience that will be necessary for future employment endeavors.

Education and Training:

SOC will work with the Anchorage School District to ensure that all participants will have the chance to complete their high school diploma requirements or at the minimum, obtain a GED. We will also partner with the University of Alaska to promote higher education among participants. Participants will be trained in all aspects of the hydroponics growing sciences, including heat and energy management, irrigation systems, lighting and other state of the art technologies.

Housing:

In partnership with NeighborWorks, housing for 20 program participants and staff will be developed within blocks of the growing operation. Youth will be responsible for housekeeping, all minor maintenance, cooking meals, etc. NeighborWorks is currently working on a HUD 811 grant that will provide for construction and three years of rental subsidy.

Counseling and Mentorship:

Anchorage Urban League is partnered with Denali Family Services who will provide needed psychological services to program participants. Participants will also enjoy peer mentoring from a local group of foster alumni, Facing Foster Care in Alaska.

THE CHALLENGE

Each year, approximately 26,000 youth nationwide "age out" of foster care services simply because they reach their 18th or 19th birthday and their foster care court order ends. Far too many young adults who exit the foster care system experience challenges in the areas of **employment, education, housing, mental and physical health, early parenthood, incarceration, and victimization.**

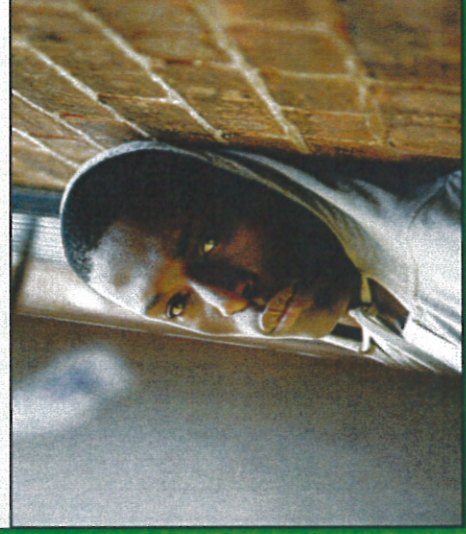
THE CONSEQUENCES

- Failure to address the needs of the foster youth quickly feeds into larger community issues such as habitual homelessness, lack of adequate health care, dependence on public services, and involvement in the criminal justice system.
- Funding for former foster care youth ages 18-25 is limited. Advocacy efforts have increased the availability of funds for youth in transition but federal and state resources are not adequate to meet the needs of this age group.

AGING OUT.

Former foster care youth face challenging life outcomes.

- 50% are unable to maintain stable employment.
- 40% lack their diploma or GED.
- 12-30% of former foster youth end up homeless.
- 45% experience early pregnancy.



THE COST.

The taxpayer cost of the consequences is huge each year.

Incarceration:

\$29,751 per inmate

Homelessness:

\$40,000 per person

Residential Treatment:

\$80,000 per client

Medical Treatment:

\$2,000 per patient